

THE
"HOW DO WE GET FROM HERE TO HEAVEN"
SERIES

ROMANS 12:1-2

MEDIA REFERENCE NUMBER WNX-505 FEBRUARY 24, 2010

THE TITLE OF THE MESSAGE:

KEEPING YOUR FOCUS – PART 2

*A SERIES ON CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP, HOLINESS
AND SPIRITUAL MATURITY IN THE LIFE OF THE BELIEVER.*

SUBJECT TOPICALLY REFERENCED UNDER:

Endurance, Perseverance, Readiness, Watchfulness

WE'VE BEEN LEARNING THE "FUNDAMENTALS" ABOUT,
"HOW DO WE GET FROM HERE TO HEAVEN?"

Romans 12:1-2

I **beseech** (urge, personally challenge, plead) you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, **that you present** your **bodies** a living sacrifice, **holy, acceptable** to God, *which is your reasonable service* :2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

2 Timothy 2:3-5

You therefore must endure hardship **as a good soldier** of Jesus Christ. :4 No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of *this* life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. :5 And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned **unless he competes** according to the rules.

KEEPING YOUR FOCUS

"IS HOW DO WE GET FROM HERE TO HEAVEN"

1.) Focus on enduring

1a.) Enduring **the past**

1b.) Enduring **the disappointments**

1c.) Enduring **the hardships**

1d.) Enduring **the life**

KEEPING YOUR FOCUS

“IS HOW DO WE GET FROM HERE TO HEAVEN”

2.) **Focus on persevering**

2a.) **Determine now to stay close to Jesus**

Throughout the Bible,

there are stories, events and accounts of what has happened to people who give up on following after God.

From the children of Israel in the wilderness to Judas Iscariot in the garden, - - the Bible is full of warnings for us to learn from.

Staying close to Jesus means, we'll have to follow Him

!!! and following takes effort !!!

John 8:30-31

As He spoke these words, many believed in Him. :31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, **“If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.**

Jesus **Gathers** His Followers

Matthew 4:18-20

Now Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. :19 Then He said to them, **“Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.”** :20 They immediately left *their* nets and **followed** Him.

(to walk in the **same shoes** or the **same steps**.
to **mimic** the direction of another)

The Holy Spirit **Unites** His followers

Acts 2:42

And they **continued steadfastly** in (1) the apostles' **doctrine** and (2) **fellowship**, (3)
in the **breaking of bread**, and (4) in **prayers**.

The **doctrine** is what the bible teaches – *nothing more !*

The **fellowship** is being with other Christians – *make sure !*

The **breaking of bread** is worship – *directed toward Him !*

The **prayer** – unity among the believers – *a commandment !*

Our "Passionate Pursuits" Reveal Our Heart's
Desire.

How do we stay close to Jesus?

We need to **Love** Jesus Christ the most

Revelation 2:4-5

Nevertheless I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love. **:5** Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place - unless you repent.

How do we stay close to Jesus?

We need to **Listen** to what Jesus says

Luke 10:38-42

Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. **:39** And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. **:40** But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister

has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.” :41 And Jesus answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. :42 But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.”

How do we stay close to Jesus?

We need to *Be* where Jesus is

Jude 21

keep yourselves in the love of God,
looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

How do we stay close to Jesus?

We need to *Act* like Jesus acts

1 John 4:17

Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; **because as He is, so are we in this world.**

FOCUS ON PERSEVERING

2b.) Determine now to stay *around others*

From the earliest outset of the church
the holy spirit sees fit to call the disciples to a “continuous state of fellowship”

Christian, be careful who and where you go.....

1 John 2:18-19

Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. :19 They went out **from us**, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but *they went out* that they might be made revealed, that none of them were of us.

The best way to develop into a stronger Christian
Is to get around others that know Jesus better than you do.

1 Corinthians 1:9

God is faithful, by whom you were **called into the fellowship of His Son**, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Meaning – that Jesus Christ is the Center of who and what we are !!!

Make sure you have GODLY, Christian friends

1 Timothy 4:15-16

Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. :16 Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

FOCUS ON PERSEVERING

2c.) Determine now to stay **in a church**

God delights in the local church, it's His organism.

To the church at Philippi, Rome, Corinth, Ephesus...

It is Gods will that your local church grow in size, influence, scope, vision, and righteousness in that place.

Satan is a really really good Devil;

He knows what works and how much energy to expend.

One of the Most Ridiculous, Silly, Stupid, Sorry and Sad weapons he uses is his version of "shock and awe"

"Shock" = (1) emotions coupled with "Awe" = (2) pride.

If Satan can get you **angry** or **upset** or hurt or bitter about the church that you attend, then he's well on his way to sterilizing you as a Christian and that's a very dangerous thing.

Ephesians 4:25-27

Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another. :26 "Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, :27 nor give place to the devil.

Hebrews 10:24-25

And let us **consider** (study) one another in order to stir up love and good works, :25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, **and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.**

KEEPING YOUR FOCUS

"IS HOW DO WE GET FROM HERE TO HEAVEN"

3.) Focus on being ready

3a.) Getting ready by being selective

Hebrews 5:13-14

For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. :14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

look at us - we're in training right now together

but there are things that threaten my training, my shape and condition

(like cookies, chocolates, potato chips, & hummus !!!)

in the same manner - there are spiritual threats

to my training, my shape and condition (like certain people, certain places, certain things...)

those things and people are not worth dragging down my walk with God.

So I Become Selective as to Who, Where, & Why

Ephesians 5:8-12

For you were once darkness, but now *you are* light in the Lord. Walk as children of light :9 (for the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), :10 finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. :11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them*. :12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.

FOCUS ON BEING READY

3b.) Staying ready by being discerning

Jesus said; “**pay close attention to what you hear.**”

Mark 4:23-24

If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.”

:24 Then He said to them, “Take heed (discern, test, judge) **what you hear.**”

Our culture has lost the ability to hear properly,

so we really need to develop a discipline for hearing God’s word.

Romans 12:1-2

“... Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, ***that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.***”

FOCUS ON BEING READY

3c.) Being ready by being vigilant

There is, in a real sense, a form of spiritual violence to being a Christian – I said “***spiritual violence***”

Matthew 11:12

And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, **but the violent take it by force.**

but the violent take it by force.

Charles Ryrie –

“men seize it by force as a precious prize. the heavenly kingdom is sought with the most ardent zeal and intense exertions a man can employ.”

Matthew 24:42-44

Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. **:43** But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. **:44** Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

2 Peter 1:10

Therefore, brethren, be even more **diligent** to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;

spoudazw spoudazo, *spoo-dad'-zo*;

to ratify, confirm, add to, strengthen, to make immovable.

But pastor jack, how do I remain in a state of readiness ?

Matthew 25:1-13

“Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. **:2** Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. **:3** Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, **:4** but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. **:5** But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. **:6** “And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’ **:7** Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. **:8** And the foolish said to the wise, “Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ **:9** But the wise answered, saying, “No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’ **:10** And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. **:11** “Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ **:12** But he answered and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ **:13** “Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

When was the last time you asked the Lord to **fill you afresh** or to **come upon you** with power or to **baptize** you with the power of His Holy Spirit?

A Practical Word About Persevering.

I know that the Bible teaches that the Lord is never going to let me go.

I rest in the truth. I don't worry about my salvation because "I want Him in my life, I want to be with Him and I am not interested in my will - I want His will to be done."

I also know that the Bible teaches that I am to stay near Him, that I'm to do all that is within my power to protect my spiritual life by making sure that I am walking with Him, knowing His will for my life, and being used by Him according to His calling on my life.

(1)

pray and invite **people to accept** the Lord.

(2)

opportunity for **rededications** and recommitments

(3)

then have the **ushers come forward** to accept your offerings and worship

(4)

pray for the offering

End of Study
